United Nations S/2018/439

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2018
English
Original: Arabic

Letter dated 9 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I am writing to you in response to the statement that the Permanent Representative of Somalia delivered before the Security Council regarding agreements that have been concluded with the authorities of Somaliland. That statement, which was delivered at the Security Council meeting that took place on 27 March 2018 to consider the situation in Somalia (S/PV.8215), runs counter to the deep and long-established relations between the United Arab Emirates and Somalia.

In that connection, I should like to reiterate that the United Arab Emirates remains resolutely committed to maintaining the unity and stability of Somalia, and to providing it with all forms of support, in particular security and military support, which includes training the Puntland coast guard and supporting its efforts to counter piracy and terrorism.

Furthermore, I should like to reaffirm that the United Arab Emirates respects the sovereignty, Constitution and laws of Somalia. Accordingly, all the agreements that the United Arab Emirates has entered into with the Somali regions were concluded on the basis of the powers vested in the heads of those regions, and it is for the federal authorities to engage with their regional counterparts to clarify the nature of those agreements and complete the relevant processes.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Lana Zaki **Nusseibeh**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

18-07537 (E) 110518 110518

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United Nations S/2018/440

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 May 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 8 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Please find attached herewith a summary of the statement by the Government of the Republic of Yemen on the recent developments on the island of Socotra (see annex).

I would greatly appreciate it if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Khaled H. **Alyemany**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

18-07743 (E) 170518

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Annex to the letter dated 8 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Summary of the statement by the Government of the Republic of Yemen on the recent developments on the Yemeni island of Socotra

5 May 2018

The Government of the Republic of Yemen considers the recent military deployment by the United Arab Emirates of troops and armoured vehicles, including tanks, to the Yemeni island of Socotra on 30 April 2018 as an unjustified military action.

These Emirati-deployed forces took control of both the island's airport and seaport and informed the local authorities, including Yemeni customs, security and intelligence officers, that they were dismissed until further notice.

The Government of Yemen stresses that this development is a reflection of the state of disagreement between the Yemeni Government and the United Arab Emirates, the essence of which is the misunderstanding over national sovereignty and the party entitled to exercise it, as well as the absence of a solid level of joint coordination, which seemed to have vanished recently.

The Government of Yemen received, on 4 May 2018, a high-level military delegation from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to go over the recent developments on the island. The delegation met with the Prime Minister, the Governor of Socotra, the directors of the Political Security Organization and the National Security Agency, the Minister of Fisheries and others. The Prime Minister informed the Saudi delegation of the recent developments that caused concerns and stressed the importance of cooperation between the parties in the Arab coalition and that the seizure of the airport and the seaport of Socotra does not fall within the parameters of such cooperation.

The Prime Minister informed the Saudi delegation and the representative of the United Arab Emirates that the Yemeni Government is keen on maintaining strong brotherly relations to strengthen the Arab coalition and provide a degree of stability, continuity and cooperation between the Government and the United Arab Emirates.

The Prime Minister stressed further that the continuation of the misunderstanding and its spread over all the liberated governorates, including the island of Socotra, is clearly damaging and can no longer be concealed, and that its impact has spread to all military and civilian institutions and negatively impacted local public opinion.

The Government appreciates the keenness of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, King of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and his Crown Prince, Prince Mohammed bin Salman, to resolve the issue and further enhance the relations between the parties of the Arab coalition.

United Nations S/2018/441

Security Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2018
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 9 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I am writing to you with regard to the letter dated 4 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/425), which contains completely unfounded allegations that were also made in previous letters. In that connection, I should like to state the following:

- Qatar strongly deplores the allegations contained in the letter of the United Arab Emirates and once again categorically denies that any Qatari fighter aircraft came within an unsafe distance of Etihad Airways flight EY322 (registration No. A6-EIM) or any other civilian aircraft. In that connection, I should like to draw attention to my identical letters dated 5 May 2018 (S/2018/185) refuting similar allegations that were made by the United Arab Emirates.

- A United Arab Emirates military aircraft entered the airspace above Qatari water without obtaining prior authorization from the competent authorities of Qatar and flew along a route that was similar to the route flown by the civilian aircraft mentioned in the United Arab Emirates letter. In response, a Qatari military aircraft set out for north-eastern Qatar and towards the United Arab Emirates military aircraft. It should be noted that the air navigation service provider in Bahrain was aware of the mission of the Qatari military aircraft.

- Having failed to justify the multiple violations of Qatari airspace that its military aircraft had committed, the United Arab Emirates authorities have resorted to taking other provocative and irresponsible actions, such as having United Arab Emirates military aircraft fly through Qatari airspace, without the authorization of the competent authorities in Qatar, at the same time as United Arab Emirates civilian aircraft, with a view to contriving incidents and using them for tendentious purposes.

- Qatar regrets that the air navigation service provider in Bahrain breached its duties in an irresponsible manner, despite the repeated calls that the relevant Qatari authorities made upon it to fulfil its professional duty under international law and the relevant navigation service agreements. Qatar is profoundly concerned at and strongly disapproves of the position taken by the navigation service provider, because it constitutes a serious violation of the obligation to ensure that international air navigation standards are applied, particularly given that the provider's biased and unprofessional position can have serious consequences for the security and safety of civil aviation. The participation of

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Bahrain in the unjust blockade of and the illegal arbitrary measures that have been taken against Qatar does not relieve the air navigation service provider in Bahrain of its responsibility and duties under the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention).

- Respecting human rights and the principles of good-neighbourliness are among the highest policy priorities of Qatar. Accordingly, Qatar has not taken any punitive measures that could be detrimental to the civilian nationals of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain, nor has it closed its airspace in response to the arbitrary and illegal measures that have been taken against Qatar and its people. Those measure include preventing Qatari civilian aircraft from flying in the airspace of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. The foregoing unequivocally refutes the allegations that have been made repeatedly by the United Arab Emirates, which claims that it is concerned about the safety and security of civil aviation and accuses Qatar of endangering the safety and security thereof, and demonstrates the extent to which Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates have been violating the rules governing air navigation and the Chicago Convention.

- It is the policy of Qatar to abide by international law scrupulously and cooperate with the international organizations that are charged with enforcing it. Moreover, Qatar strives assiduously to adhere to the highest quality standards in respect of maintaining civil aviation security and safety standards. Accordingly, it has made every effort to cooperate with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and support the efforts of ICAO to strengthen civil aviation safety and security standards and ensure full compliance with those standards, including by hosting the fifth ICAO conference on training and voluntarily supporting the "Leave No Country Behind" initiative.

Lastly, Qatar reaffirms that the repetition by the United Arab Emirates of the allegations set out in the above-mentioned letter from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates is intended to cover up the violations of Qatari airspace that the United Arab Emirates has committed repeatedly and to divert attention from its provocative and irresponsible actions, which include escalating regional tension by contriving incidents in order to obscure its ulterior motives, without regard for the security and stability of the region. Qatar reiterates that it is the obligation of the civil aviation authorities of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates to manage the air navigation sector in a professional, serious, responsible and non-politicized manner. They must also steer clear of political strife and put professionalism above all other considerations The Government of Qatar reiterates that it is striving to exercise maximum self-restraint with regard to the provocative actions that have been taken by the United Arab Emirates, and that it strives assiduously to adhere to international law, the Charter of the United Nations and international conventions on air navigation regulations for international civil aviation.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Alya Ahmed Saif **Al-Thani**
Permanent Representative

United Nations S/2018/442

Security Council

Distr.: General
10 May 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 9 May 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution 2400 (2018) of 8 February 2018, by which the Council decided to extend the mandate of the Panel of Experts on the Sudan until 12 March 2019.

In connection with my letter dated 14 March 2018 (S/2018/223), I wish to inform you that, after consulting with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, I have appointed Mr. Nikolai Dobronravin (Russian Federation) to serve on the Panel of Experts on the Sudan as regional expert.

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

18-07605 (E) 110518

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United Nations S/2018/443

Security Council

Distr.: General
10 May 2018

Original: English

Identical letters dated 10 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On 10 May 2018, shortly after midnight local time, as our citizens were asleep in their homes, the Quds Force of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard fired a barrage of approximately 20 rockets into Israeli territory. Thankfully, there were no Israeli casualties or injuries. Our security forces retaliated against the rocket launcher that had attacked Israel, as well as additional Iranian military targets in Syria.

Israel holds the Government of Iran, together with the Syrian regime, directly responsible for this attack, and we will continue to defend our citizens vigorously against all acts of aggression. Israel is not interested in escalation, but under no circumstances will we allow Iran to establish a military presence in Syria whose purpose is to attack Israel and to make an already fragile situation in the region deteriorate.

This brazen attack on our sovereignty did not occur in a vacuum. Just last February, my delegation informed you of the explosive-laden unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) that Iranian forces had launched from Syria into Israel. We have warned you repeatedly about Iran's alarming entrenchment in Syria, and these acts of aggression are, regrettably, a realization of these very warnings. These actions are part of a dangerous pattern of violent Iranian activities throughout our region, all aimed at fulfilling the goal of terrorizing innocent people and implementing a radical, extremist regime stretching from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea.

I call on the Security Council to condemn this attack immediately and demand that Iran remove its military presence from Syria that not only threatens Israel, but the stability of our entire region. The international community must not stand idly by while a tyrannical regime attacks a sovereign nation and continues to threaten the very existence of a Member State of the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Danny **Danon**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

18-07633 (E) 140518

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United Nations S/2018/444

Security Council

Distr.: General
10 May 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 9 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, under the presidency of the Republic of Poland, the Security Council is scheduled to hold a ministerial open debate on the subject "Protection of civilians in armed conflict" on 22 May 2018. To help to guide the discussion during the event, Poland has prepared a concept note (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council in connection with the item entitled "Protection of civilians in armed conflict".

(*Signed*) Joanna **Wronecka**
Ambassador

18-07619 (E) 150518

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Annex to the letter dated 9 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, to be held on 22 May 2018

Overview

1. Over the past 12 months, tens of thousands of civilians have been killed or injured and millions have been forced to flee their homes as a direct result of armed conflict. Last year, United Nations actors recorded more than 26,000 civilian casualties in only six countries (Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Somalia and Yemen), caused by deliberate or indiscriminate attacks. Similarly, in Libya, Mali, Nigeria, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine, parties to armed conflict continue to cause disproportionate civilian harm. The urbanization of conflicts, attacks on civilian objects and the continued use of explosive weapons in populated areas in the course of hostilities have been of particular concern in this regard.

2. These worrying trends underline the need to enhance respect for international humanitarian law by parties to conflict, including by prompting the implementation of practical precautionary measures adapted to the realities of today's armed conflicts. Existing national frameworks, as well as commitments and action plans by parties to conflict, provide examples of good practice which can be promoted, including through engagement with non-State armed groups.

3. Poland, which is presiding over the Security Council in May 2018, mindful of the ongoing large-scale civilian harm, destruction and suffering caused by the behaviour of parties to armed conflict, will convene a ministerial-level open debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict to discuss the annual report of the Secretary-General on this essential topic and to promote practical measures through which such impact can effectively be prevented or minimized.

4. The practical measures to be discussed are those which are being taken by parties to armed conflict, Member States, the United Nations and other partners in order to improve respect for international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, and which serve to enhance the protection of civilians, including persons in vulnerable situations and those in need of special protection: women, children, persons with disabilities, missing persons and detainees.

5. The Council has discussed the protection of civilians and civilian objects in armed conflict on numerous occasions. In the past two years alone, the Council has held five meetings on the topic. In numerous decisions, the Council has consistently called upon all parties to conflict to respect international humanitarian law, as well as human rights law and refugee law, as appropriate, and to promote good practices by parties to conflict. The Council has specifically underscored the continuing importance of enhancing respect for international humanitarian law by non-State armed groups, of humanitarian actors' engagement with all parties towards that goal and of gaining safe and unimpeded access to people in need of assistance. In its resolution 1894 (2009), the Council decided that United Nations peacekeeping operations must prioritize the protection of civilians in allocating available capacity and resources, underlining the importance that it attaches to this issue. In the presidential statement of 25 November 2015 (S/PRST/2015/23), the Security Council qualified the protection of civilians in armed conflict as "one of the core issues on its agenda".

6. In May 2018, it will have been two years since the Security Council adopted its landmark resolution 2286 (2016) under its protection of civilians agenda — its first resolution dedicated solely to the protection of medical personnel, equipment and facilities in armed conflict. In that resolution, the Council outlined a road map for action by States and parties to conflict, calling upon them to develop domestic legal frameworks that ensure respect for relevant international law; to collect data on obstructions to the provision of medical care; to share challenges and good practices; to integrate precautionary measures in the planning and conduct of operations; to conduct investigations into violations affecting the provision of medical care; and to adopt remedial measures, including accountability and reparations. The Council also demanded that all parties to armed conflict facilitate safe and unimpeded passage for medical personnel and humanitarian personnel exclusively engaged in medical duties, their equipment, transport and supplies, including surgical items, to all people in need, consistent with international humanitarian law. Lastly, the Council requested the Secretary-General to provide recommendations to enhance the protection of medical personnel, equipment and facilities in conflict. Those recommendations (S/2016/722) list concrete ways in which all stakeholders can work towards that goal.

Objectives

7. The main aim of the debate will be to advance the protection of civilians at all levels and to encourage efforts to enhance respect for international humanitarian law and human rights law by parties to conflict, Member States, regional organizations and the United Nations, as well as to develop and implement policies and strategies to avoid civilian harm in the conduct of hostilities, including in the context of the "global effort" called for by the Secretary-General in his report of May 2017 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/2017/414).

8. The debate will comprise a review of the current state of protection of civilians, including the extent of respect for international law, and allow Member States to express their views on how to improve it. The annual report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict will provide the necessary basis in that regard.

9. Member States are requested to share their views on existing good practices with regard to international humanitarian law. Such practices could include measures that Member States have taken to limit harm to civilians during military operations, to facilitate the rapid and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian and medical assistance and to promote respect for international humanitarian law by parties to armed conflict over which they have influence, including in the context of urban warfare. Member States are encouraged to refer to specific policies and practices that have been adopted to ensure respect for the law and accountability for serious violations thereof. They are welcome to discuss pledges to improve the implementation of best practices, such as the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians. Member States are also invited to consider steps that can be taken to encourage non-State armed groups to respect international humanitarian law, including such initiatives as the deeds of commitment developed by the non-governmental organization Geneva Call. Member States are further invited to engage with civil society, the United Nations and impartial humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross. Lastly, Member States are requested to reflect on the role of the Security Council in promoting the development of protection policies and the adoption of good practices by parties to conflict.

Format, participants and outcome

10. The ministerial-level open debate will be opened with briefings by the Secretary-General, the Director General of the International Committee of the Red

Cross, Yves Daccord, and a civil society representative, Hanaa Edwar. The debate will be chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, Jacek Czaputowicz.

11. Representatives of States that are not members of the Security Council will be invited to make interventions of no longer than three minutes, focusing on the points mentioned above. A summary of the meeting is to be circulated as a document of the Council and the General Assembly, with a view to facilitating the Council's possible follow-up on specific practical proposals put forward during the debate.

Indicative questions for consideration

12. The following questions could be considered during the open debate:

(a) What avenues could be pursued by the Security Council to strengthen the protection of civilians in armed conflict? What kinds of action can the Council take to effectively prevent and respond to violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law in situations of armed conflict?

(b) How can the Security Council and Member States ensure that international humanitarian law and international human rights law are respected in all circumstances in all forms of contemporary armed conflict?

(c) How can Member States take more effective and practical steps to use their influence and enhance respect for international humanitarian law by all parties to conflict? What other diplomatic forums, including regional ones, can Member States exploit to promote best practices?

(d) How can the Security Council further integrate the promotion of respect for international humanitarian law and human rights law into its work and within the context of United Nations peacekeeping?

(e) How can the Security Council support peacekeeping missions in better preventing threats to civilians?

(f) How can the Security Council support international courts and tribunals, as well as international investigative and judicial mechanisms, in ensuring accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law?

(g) What steps can be taken by Member States to promote adherence to commitments made by non-State armed groups as a result of their engagement with civil society, the United Nations and impartial humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross?

(h) How can Member States make sure that strengthening the resilience of health systems is incorporated into their work? How can the Security Council and Member States enhance the implementation of resolution 2286 (2016) on the protection of medical personnel, equipment and facilities in armed conflict?

United Nations S/2018/445

Security Council

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10 May 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 9 May 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government and with reference to the letter dated 13 April 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Israeli regime to the United Nations (S/2018/349), and pursuant to my letter dated 20 February 2018 (S/2018/142) regarding some baseless allegations against the Islamic Republic of Iran, I have the honour to draw your attention to the following:

Contrary to the made-up claim, operational details that were provided to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran illustrate that the unmanned aerial vehicle was flying inside Syria near the border with Jordan and the occupied Palestinian territories for the purpose of monitoring and surveillance of ISIL and other terrorist groups there. It was neither armed nor had intention for engagement or mission for possible attack anywhere.

The reckless Israeli action in this instance only helped ISIL and other terrorist groups in Syria. There is, indeed, enough evidence of Israeli support to these terrorist groups, which are under Security Council sanctions, and this incident clearly demonstrates its destructive policy in assisting those groups for the purpose of destabilizing the region. The Israeli regime was established through occupation and aggression and its survival has been intertwined with such destabilizing behaviours.

The Israeli regime invoked that instance for a series of so-called pre-emptive military attacks, including the one on 9 April 2018, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations. The recent letters by the Israeli regime (S/2018/111 and S/2018/349), as well as its public statements, clearly demonstrate that the military attacks were carried out with the obvious intention of targeting Iranian nationals and interests legitimately deployed in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Islamic Republic of Iran preserves its right to self-defence in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and calls upon the Security Council to uphold its responsibilities by condemning these acts of aggression and asking the Israeli regime to stop its dangerous and constant adventurism and provoking behaviours, which are threatening regional peace and security.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gholamali **Khoshroo**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

18-07631 (E) 140518

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